

Appln. No. 09/818,891
Amd. dated December 17, 2003
Reply to Office Action of October 8, 2003

REMARKS

The Official Action of October 8, 2003, and the prior art relied upon therein have been carefully reviewed. The claims in the application are now claims 1 and 3-8, and these claims define patentable subject matter consistent with what is stated in the Office Action, whereby early allowance is warranted. Accordingly, the applicant respectfully requests favorable consideration and formal allowance.

Claim 2 has only been objected and has not been rejected on the basis of any prior art. Paragraph 2 on page 3 of the Office Action indicates that claim 2 "would be allowable if rewritten in independent form" Accordingly, the subject matter of claim 2 has now been incorporated into main claim 1 whereby main claim 1 now corresponds with original claim 2.

As claim 2 (now claim 1) has been indicated as being allowable, applicant understands that such claim is deemed by the PTO to define novel and unobvious subject matter under Sections 102 and 103. As claims 3-8 depend from and incorporate the subject matter of claim 1 (previously claim 2), claims 3-8 should also now be in condition for formal allowance. Accordingly, all of the presently pending claims should now be in condition for formal allowance consistent with what is stated in the official action.

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Claims 1 and 3-8 have been rejected as anticipated under Section 102 by Gaiser. Applicant need not address this rejection at the present time, in view of the incorporation of claim 2 into claim 1, claim 2 having not been so rejected.

Applicant respectfully reserves the right to pursue claims the same as or similar to original claims 1 and 3-8 in a continuing application, if applicant chooses to do so, applicant in such a case relying on his rights to do so, including those rights provided by Section 120, without any penalty whatsoever.

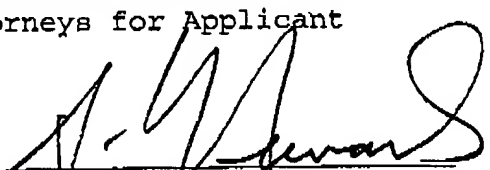
Applicant believes that all issues have been addressed and resolved above whereby the present application should now be in condition for formal allowance.

Applicant respectfully awaits the results of a first examination on the merits.

Respectfully submitted,

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